



Childhood Connections

February 1, 2023

Spotlight on Professionals

Spotlight on Professionals aims to share stories from those working in childhood programs. This includes all professionals such as home visiting, early intervention, child care, Head Start, preschool, and afterschool. These stories are also available on the [Early Connections website](#).



Photo Credit: News Tribune, Jefferson City, MO

This month, the spotlight is on Donna Scheidt, the executive director of Little Explorers Discovery Center in Jefferson City, MO.

Years ago, Donna learned about the [T.E.A.C.H. Scholarship](#) (Teacher Education And Compensation Helps) for educators in licensed child care programs.

Since 2003, Donna and the Little Explorers Discovery Center has sponsored ten child care educators through the T.E.A.C.H. program. All ten educators earned their Child Development Associate® Credential (CDA), including two going on to earn Associates degrees and two earning Bachelor's degrees.

Donna shared, "The T.E.A.C.H. program is wonderful for working professionals to get their education. It also improves the quality of any child care program. It has reduced the stress in my life by helping my staff get the education they need in order to run a quality child care program. It has allowed our Center to remain accredited and it has helped us maintain quality standards in child care."

Learn more about the [T.E.A.C.H. scholarship](#).

APPLICATION OPEN! Grants for Child Care Subsidy Providers

A new funding opportunity to help sustain operations for child care providers is now available!

- Providers who are contracted with the DESE child care subsidy program and currently



NEW! 2022 Wins!

Last year was a year full of accomplishments in the Office of Childhood. We increased the

operating with children enrolled and receiving care are eligible to apply.

- Approved providers will receive additional funding based on the number of children who attend the program and documented in the state's time and attendance system.
- Deadline to apply is Wednesday, May 31, 2023, at 11:59 p.m.
- Visit the child care relief [webpage](#) to complete an application.

number of providers enrolled in child care subsidy by 23% and trained over 1,000 early childhood professionals on developmental milestones and screenings.

Learn about all of our 2022 accomplishments on our [storybook](#).

NEW! Child Care Subsidy Orientation

You told us our training was outdated and we listened. We are pleased to announce that the Child Care Subsidy Orientation training has been updated and is now available on the [DESE website](#).

This training has a new format. It explains the Office of Childhood's role in the child care industry and gives providers the information they need to better understand the child care subsidy program from application to payment.

UPDATE! Find Your Local Community Leader

Community leaders provide resources in a designated area in Missouri with a focus on supporting families with children birth to age five. This coordinated support system is designed to ensure families have the knowledge and resources to make informed decisions about the safety, health and

APPLICATION OPEN! Preschool Start-up Grants for LEAs

A new funding opportunity for local education agencies (LEA) is now available! These funds can be used to help start a new preschool program or add a new classroom for the 2023-24 academic year.

- For more details about timelines and grant activities, review the [Terms & Conditions](#).
- Deadline to apply is Friday, March 31, 2023, at 11:59 p.m.
- If you have questions about the application, contact us at Preschool@dese.mo.gov or call 573-751-6793.

APPLICATION OPEN! Child Care Start-up Grants for Higher Education

A new funding opportunity for institutions of higher education is now available! These funds can be used to start-up a new child care program or expand an existing child care program, including lab schools.

- Public and private colleges and universities in the state of Missouri are eligible to apply.
- For more details about timelines and grant activities, review the [Terms and Conditions](#).
- Deadline to apply is Friday, March 31, 2023, at 11:59 p.m.
- If you have questions about the application, contact us at Childhood@dese.mo.gov or call 573-751-6793.

UPDATE! Additional PDG Grant Awarded to Missouri

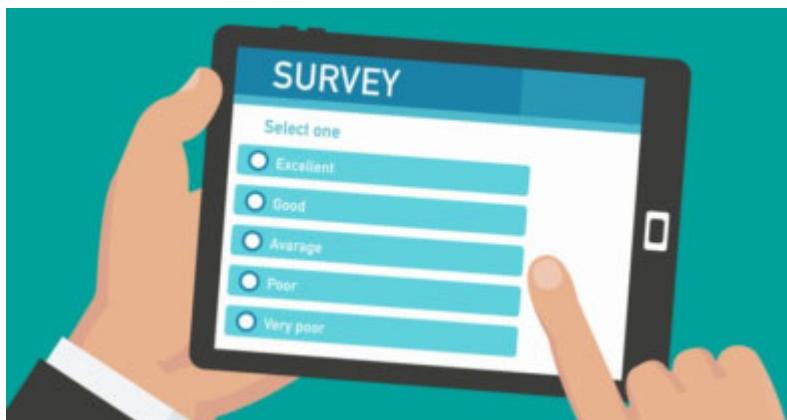
DESE recently [announced](#) that Missouri has been awarded a one-year, \$4 million Preschool Development Birth Through Age Five Planning Grant (PDG B-5) from the federal Administration for Children and Families (ACF). The funding will support planning and capacity-building activities across the early childhood system to achieve the goals in the [Strategic Vision & Roadmap for 2026](#).

This new planning grant allows Missouri to conduct additional activities to coordinate childhood services for families and supports for childhood professionals. Check out the [full application](#) and a list of all of the PDG grant activities planned for 2023.

NEW! Stakeholder Survey

As an important stakeholder in Missouri Early Care and Education system, your feedback helps guide the state's actions. Your feedback assists in evaluating the outcomes of the Preschool Development B-5 grant, as well as progress on DESE's strategic plan for Missouri's childhood system.

This [five-minute survey](#) asks questions about the early care and education system in Missouri. Please complete the survey by March 17, 2023



NOW OPEN! Conference on the Young Years Registration

Registration is now open for the 50th annual Conference on the Young Years (CYY). Join us March 9-11, 2023, at Tan-Tar-A Conference Center in Osage Beach, MO, for three days of professional development.

Presentations will be specifically geared to early educators, child care providers, home visitors,

education of their children.

Visit [EarlyConnections](#) to find your local community leader.

NEW! Afterschool Grants

Two competitive grants for afterschool programs will open this spring.

To help programs prepare, the afterschool team will have a grant writing workshop on February 17, 2023. Registration is now open [online](#) and there is no cost to attend the workshop.

If you have any questions about the grants or the workshop contact the afterschool team at afterschool@dese.mo.gov or 573-526-5395

NEW! Feedback Opportunity for Child Care Providers

Licensed and license-exempt child care providers now have the opportunity to provide routine feedback about inspections and investigations.

After each inspection or investigation, your compliance inspector will give you the link to a survey.

Complete the survey to help us continue to make improvements to the inspection and

administrators, and all who support early education. You can find more information and see all presentation choices [on DESE's website](#).

UPDATE! Summer Third Birthdays Guidance for Transition From First Steps to ECSE

Children who have summer third birthdays between April 1 through August 15 may choose to continue in First Steps after age three. The child may continue until school starts in the fall after the child's third birthday or transition to ECSE on the child's third birthday.

A recorded training and frequently asked questions document are available on the [First Steps webpage](#) to assist First Steps and ECSE staff with the requirements and timelines for children with summer birthdays.

NEW! Child Care Subsidy Rate Study

The Office of Childhood has teamed up with University of Missouri-Columbia (MU) to conduct a Child Care Subsidy Rate Structure and Reimbursement System Study.

If you are contracted with the DESE child care subsidy program you may receive calls or emails from the team at MU asking for feedback from you. Participation is voluntary but critical to helping the Office of Childhood understand what rate structure, payment delivery system, and attendance tracking practices work best for your program.

We appreciate your participation and input as we continue to improve Missouri's child care subsidy program. This activity is part of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Stabilization Spend Plan for child care.

REMINDER! Parents Must Complete a Medication Authorization Form Before Administering Medication

Licensed and Licensed Exempt providers:

Parents must complete a [medication authorization form](#) before you can administer medication to children. The form must include the date, length of time, dosage amount, and time of day to administer.

investigation process for child care compliance.

UPDATE! Early Childhood State Advisory Council (ECSAC) Meeting

The next meeting of the ECSAC will be on Tuesday, April 25, 2023 at 12:30 p.m.

Read more about the council responsibilities on the [ECSAC webpage](#).

RESOURCE! Safe Sleep and Infant Loss Resources

FLOURISH St. Louis, an initiative powered by Generate Health, is working to reduce infant mortality in St. Louis. Resources are available on the [FLOURISH website](#).

RESOURCE! Conflict Resolution Webinars

For families and educators working through conflict is an essential part of supporting children. Visit the [Center for Parent Information and Resources](#) to view a series of webinars developed by [The Center for Appropriate Dispute Resolution in Special Education](#) to help families and educators learn how to work together through conflict.

You can find the form along with other child care forms on this [DESE website](#).

RESOURCE! Training Available



Training for Child Care Professionals! Missouri MOve Smart Child Care is sponsoring a new Diane H. Craft, Ph.D. physical activity training in February! Dr. Craft is the author of *Active Play! Fun Physical Activities for Young Children* and is a renowned national expert in early childhood physical activity.

Learn to lead physical activities that help young children with disabilities develop their movement skills in natural settings while playing with typical peers. These physical activities need only inexpensive equipment and small spaces, accommodate children of varying ages and abilities, can also be played by families at home, and are FUN!

Inclusive Physical Activities with Young Children with Disabilities

Date: Saturday, February 25, 2023

Time: 8:30 – 10:30 a.m.

Where: Virtual

[Register here](#)

Spotlight on Success

Spotlight on Success aims to share stories from local programs that are building community partnerships in order to strengthen and coordinate childhood programs.



Photo Credit: Lindbergh Schools

This month's Spotlight on Success features Lindbergh Schools, a public school district in St. Louis County. Lindbergh Schools consists of two Early Childhood Education (ECE) centers, six Elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school.

Lindbergh Schools are committed to helping students succeed not only in academics, but also in life. They prepare students for success through innovative instruction. Lindbergh focuses on collaboration, creativity, communication, and critical thinking. Strong Community support, excellent teachers, staff, and administrators propel this high-quality education.

Recently, Lindbergh High School "Flyers" (LHS) students in the child development class taught "mini" lessons in ECE classrooms! The LHS students have been spending Wednesdays each week at ECE, which culminated with them getting a chance to teach a lesson.

"A lot of planning goes into this day and the students will work by themselves or with a partner in every ECE classroom," LHS FACS teacher Erin McGrath said. "Great connections are made between the 'big' Flyers and future Flyers."

UPDATE! Preschool Development Grant



The Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five (PDG B-5) provides funding over three years to coordinate a more effective, high-quality early childhood system that better prepares Missouri children for success.

Each month the Office of Childhood hosts a live webinar to provide updates and information about the PDG B-5 to stakeholders. A [recording](#) and the [PowerPoint slides](#) from the January webinar is available in case you were unable to attend and wish to hear the information. You can view archived webinars here:

- [November 2022](#)
- [October 2022](#)
- [September 2022](#)
- [August 2022](#)
- [July 2022](#)
- [June 2022](#)

A [PDG B-5 dashboard](#) is also updated monthly. This dashboard provides an at-a-glance look at priority areas, budget status, and key accomplishments.

PDG B-5 Monthly Webinar

Join us for the next PDG B-5 Stakeholder webinar on February 28, 2023, from noon to 12:45 p.m. to learn more and ask questions. You can [access the webinar](#) in a Google Chrome or Safari web browser. Do not view in Internet Explorer. We hope you can participate!

Archived Editions of Childhood Connections

Visit the Office of Childhood website to find [previous editions](#) of the Childhood Connections.

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